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Letter dated 6 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 6 February 1998 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plumer, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Economic and Social Council, under item 13 (f) of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* To be issued as E/1998/100.

ANNEX

Letter dated 6 February 1998 from Mr. Aytuğ Plumer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the paper entitled "Standardization of geographical names in Cyprus", which was submitted by the Greek Cypriot administration during the Seventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, and has been circulated as document E/CONF.91/CRP.25 dated 14 January 1998. Since this paper contains unfounded allegations aimed at misrepresenting the realities on the island, I am compelled to respond to these allegations in writing in order to set the record straight.

The Greek Cypriot side, in a vain attempt to absolve itself from the responsibility of creating and perpetuating the Cyprus dispute, once again refers to the legitimate presence of a guarantor power in Northern Cyprus as an "occupation". I wish to reiterate that the only occupation in Cyprus is the 34-year-old usurpation and continued occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of government of the once bi-communal Republic of Cyprus.

Turkey intervened on the island following the coup d'état engineered by Greece in 1974, which constituted a blatant attempt by Greece to annex the island (enosis) and was described by the Greek Cypriot side's own leader, Archbishop Makarios, in his speech before the Security Council on 19 July 1974, as "an invasion".[1] One should recall that the Turkish intervention in Cyprus was carried out against the background of an 11-year-long systematic campaign of 'ethnic cleansing' directed against the Turkish Cypriot people by the Greek Cypriot side, acting in collusion with Greece. With the coup d'état of 1974, the threat of total annihilation of the Turkish Cypriots at the hands of the combined forces of Greece and their collaborators in Cyprus had become imminent.

It hardly needs to be stressed that Turkey's presence on the island, which emanates from the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, is a vital security requirement for the Turkish Cypriots, as it serves as a deterrent against the repetition of Greek-Greek Cypriot aggression. In the face of the unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces by the Greek Cypriot administration and the implementation of the so-called "joint defense doctrine" with Greece, the necessity of maintaining the Turkish deterrent becomes all the more obvious.

Presently in Cyprus, there are two sovereign peoples, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, each living separately under the roof of their respective States within pluralistic democratic systems. Naturally, decisions in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are taken by the elected representatives of the Turkish Cypriot people, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus has no jurisdiction or say whatsoever. The Greek Cypriot administration cannot arrogate to itself the right to interfere with or to complain about the choice of geographical names in Northern Cyprus, which is done on the basis of the official language of the country, namely Turkish. One could hardly expect Turkish Cypriots, whose mother tongue is Turkish and who have inhabited the island for centuries, to refer to the towns, villages and topography of Northern Cyprus using nomenclature other than Turkish. The clamour about the

standardization of geographical names in Northern Cyprus is, therefore, totally unwarranted. Since Cyprus is the common home of the Greek Cypriot people and of the Turkish Cypriot people, the Turkish Cypriots have as much right as the Greek Cypriots to refer to the places and topography of their homeland in their own language.

The Greek Cypriots have no right to accuse anyone of 'destroying the cultural heritage of the island by changing geographical names', since the very heart of the Cyprus question is their denial of the identity and vested right of sovereign equality of the Turkish Cypriot people. As such, since the Greek Cypriot armed onslaught of 1963, the Greek Cypriot side has usurped and monopolized the title of the 'Government of Cyprus'. During the period from 1963 to 1974, the Greek Cypriots, with the support of Greece, endeavoured to eradicate the Turkish Cypriots and the Turkish-Muslim heritage of the island through a systematic campaign of 'ethnic cleansing'. The Greek Cypriot administration continues to implement an inhuman and archaic policy of embargo and political isolation against the Turkish Cypriots.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Economic and Social Council, under item 13 (f) of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLUMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

Notes

[1] See Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year, 1760th meeting.